

Greetings Mid-Coast LSAC and TWG Members and Alternates –

As you know, DEQ recently notified EPA and NOAA (DEQ letter dated 2/12/2013) that DEQ will not release a draft Mid-Coast Implementation Ready Total Maximum Daily Load (IR-TMDL) by June 30, 2013. This date is significant because it represents the latest date that we estimate a draft IR-TMDLs could be submitted and still provide the federal agencies adequate review time to meet key milestone dates in their CZARA Settlement Agreement (NWEA v. Locke, et al.).

DEQ's decision is based on a realistic assessment of the technical complexity of the IR-TMDL process and the demands on both the agency staff and the local stakeholder advisory committee (LSAC) and work group members. DEQ will send follow-up letters to EPA and NOAA describing the process and developing revised timelines for completing the MidCoast TMDLs.

DEQ is committed to developing the Mid Coast IR-TMDL. As with past TMDLs, this approach begins by discussing with local advisory committee members the following: water quality standards, 303d listings and location; pollutant, loading capacity, and excess load; source assessment and linkage analysis; allocations and surrogates; margin of safety; implementation measures and the water quality management plan. In the Mid Coast IR-TMDL process we have already had discussions about a number of these topics and will build on that prior work. As we move forward, we will be reviewing the local data and information with the local stakeholder advisory committee and work group members and discussing such topics as:

- The data used for the impaired listings (303(d) list)
- local data to understand the cause(s) of the individual impairments
- Use of modeling and analysis tools to determine loading capacity and characterizing the watershed
- Determination of the sources of the pollutant and analyze the linkages to human and natural sources
- Determination of pollution reduction targets and assignment of allocations for contributing sources, after accounting for natural sources
- How best to involve stakeholders throughout the process.
- How to apply results and work with the local stakeholders and Work Group members to determine what actions are needed and who should be doing what and when (Implementation Ready).

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We do not have a pre-determined outcome for the TMDL. DEQ will use the data, analysis, and stakeholder input to determine the final TMDL. Of course, DEQ maintains ownership and final discretion on the TMDL.

Therefore, for the Sediment TMDL, we are now focusing our efforts on the source assessment and linkage analysis and will be working to get advice from the Sediment Technical Working Group (TWG) and LSAC members. This process will be presented at the March 20<sup>th</sup> joint LSAC-Sediment TWG meeting.

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